CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method of programming a memory unit in a hard copy output
2   engine comprising:
3   determining a geographical area within which the hard copy output
4   engine is to be deployed;
5   determining an electronic address for a consumables supplier
6   appropriate to the geographical area; and
7   programming the electronic address into the memory.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein determining an electronic
2   address comprises determining a universal resource locator for an original
3   equipment manufacturer.

1   3.   The method of claim 1, wherein determining an electronic
2   address comprises determining a universal resource locator for a reseller of
3   consumable supplies associated with the hard copy output engine.

1   4.   The method of claim 1, further comprising programming the
2   memory with product descriptors for consumable supplies associated with the
3   hard copy output engine.

4   5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:
5   determining that the electronic address for the consumables supplier is
6   obsolete;
7   determining a revised electronic address for a consumables supplier
8   appropriate to the geographical area; and
9   re-programming the memory with the revised electronic address to
10 replace the obsolete electronic address.

1   6.   The method of claim 1, wherein the hard copy output engine is

2   chosen from a group consisting of: facsimile machines, photocopiers and

3   printers.

1   7.   The method of claim 1, wherein determining an electronic

2   address for comprises determining a universal resource locator for a vendor

3   chosen from a group consisting of: an original equipment manufacturer, a

4   reseller or a supplier of office supplies including hard copy output engine

5   consumables.

1   8.   A method of obtaining consumable supplies for a hard copy output

2   engine comprising:

3   determining that an amount of a consumable for the hard copy output

4   engine is less than a threshold amount;

5   extracting an electronic address for a vendor of the consumable from a

6   memory included in the hard copy output engine; and

7   initiating communication with the supplier using the electronic address.

1   9.   The method of claim 8, wherein extracting an electronic address

2   comprises extracting a universal resource locator.

1   10.   The method of claim 8, wherein extracting an electronic address

2   comprises extracting a universal resource locator for a vendor of consumables

3   appropriate to a geographical area within which the hard copy output engine is

4   deployed.

1   11.   The method of claim 8, wherein initiating communication includes

2   transmitting an electronic message ordering a predetermined quantity of the

3   consumable determined to be present in an amount less than the threshold amount.

1   12.   The method of claim 8, wherein determining is in response to a

2   sensor in the hard copy output engine sensing that an amount of the consumable is

3   less than the threshold amount.

1   13.   The method of claim 8, wherein initiating communication

2   comprises initiating a servlet.

1   14.   The method of claim 8, wherein the hard copy output engine is

2   chosen from a group consisting of: facsimile machines, photocopiers and printers.

1   15.   A computer implemented control system for a hard copy output

2   engine, the system comprising:

3   memory included in the hard copy output engine and configured to store

4   data representing an electronic address for a supplier of consumables for the hard

5   copy output engine; and

6   processing circuitry configured to:

7   determine that an amount of a consumable for the hard copy

8   output engine is less than a threshold amount;

9   extract the electronic address from the memory; and

10   initiate communication with the supplier using the electronic

11   address.

1   16.   The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein

2   the processor configured to extract an electronic address comprises a processor

3   configured to extract a universal resource locator for a vendor of consumables

4   appropriate to a geographical area within which the hard copy output engine is

5   deployed.

1   17.   The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein

2   the processor configured to initiate communication includes a processor configured

3   to transmit an electronic message ordering a predetermined quantity of the

4   consumable determined to be present in an amount less than the threshold amount.

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1   18.   The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein

2   the processor configured to initiate communication includes a processor configured

3   to initiate a servlet.

1   19.   The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein

2   the hard copy output engine is chosen from a group consisting of: facsimile

3   machines, photocopiers and printers.

1   20.   The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein

2   the processor configured to extract an electronic address comprises a processor

3   configured to extract a universal resource locator.

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